Accessibility and Accommodations

(Appendix C, excerpted from the spring 2026 PAM)

Appendix C

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Accessibility and Accommodations

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

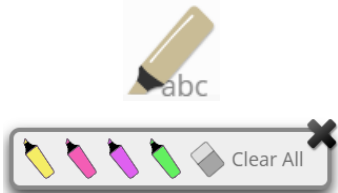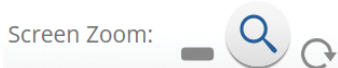## Part I: Accessibility Features for All Students

(A) Universal Accessibility Features (UFs)

Universal Accessibility features are tools and supports available to **all** students that are built into the MCAS Student Kiosk (the MCAS computer-based testing platform) or provided by a test administrator on the computer- or paper-based tests. For more information about Universal Accessibility features, refer to the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility).
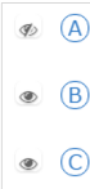
Before being assigned universal accessibility features, students should use the tools in the MCAS tutorial and practice tests and, when possible, during regular classroom instruction.

The following table lists the universal accessibility features for computer-based and paper-based testing. UF4, listed with the designation of (SR) in the table below, must be identified in the Student Registration **prior to the start of testing**.

Table 1. Universal Accessibility Features for Computer-Based Testing

Accommodation Name and Number#	CBT Administration Considerations
UF1: Highlighter tool	A highlighter, like other visual organizers, is a way for a student to maintain focus on specific sections of an assignment or on an assessment.
	Students can highlight text electronically as needed to recall and/or emphasize. The highlighter tool is located in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen. Highlighting over text can be removed. For students also using color contrast (UF2), highlighter colors may adjust depending on the color contrast option selected.
	Note: Any highlights made by a student with the highlighter tool will be lost if a student pauses a test for more than 60 minutes, signs out of a test, submits a test, or if there is a circumstance that abruptly closes the kiosk (e.g., the device shutting down due to low battery).
UF2: Color contrast	Students can change the background and font color based on need or preference by selecting the color contrast tool from the toolbar at the bottom of the screen.
UF3: Screen zoom tool	Students who have visual impairments or unique visual needs may access an enlargement tool or device.
	The enlargement tool enlarges screen content to 150%, 200%, and 300%.
	Students who need more magnification will need to use screen enlargement software.
UF4: Enlarged curser/ Mouse pointer tool *(SR)*	Students can select an enlarged and colored cursor.

Accommodation Name and Number#	CBT Administration Considerations
UF5: Line reader tool 	A line reader, like other visual organizers, is a way for a student to maintain focus on a specific section. It masks text so only part can be viewed at a time. Students can select the line reader tool from the toolbar at the bottom of the screen. The tool can be resized, moved around the screen, and closed.
UF6: Hiding options tool (available for multiple-choice items) 	Students can click an icon of an eye to toggle between hiding answer choices and having them reappear. This tool may be useful for students that find visual information and multiple answer options distracting.
UF7: Answer Eliminator	Not available in 2026. Students should use UF6 for this functionality.
UF8: Item flag/bookmark 	Students can select the star icon to save a question to come back to later and can select the down arrow to access a review screen to navigate to another test question.
UF9: Audio aid (e.g., amplification device, FM access)	**Note:** Smartphones may not be used. There is no auditory component in the computer-based test. If students will also use the text-to-speech accommodation, the school should determine whether such a device is compatible and necessary.
UF10: Notepad tool and scratch paper (required for all students) 	Students may write notes during testing to assist developing responses to test question items. Students can type their own notes on each test question by selecting the notepad from the toolbar menu at the bottom of the screen. The notepad can be resized, moved around the screen, and closed. Notes typed into the notepad tool will remain across all questions that are based on the same passage (for ELA) or stimulus. **Note:** Notes entered in the notepad will be lost if a student pauses a test for more than 60 minutes, signs out of a test, submits a test, or if there is a circumstance that abruptly closes the kiosk (e.g., the device shutting down due to low battery).
UF11: Test administrator reads aloud/signs selected words	Test administrator reads aloud selected words (or signs selected words, in the case of a student who is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing) for Mathematics, STE, and Civics tests only as requested by the student. This feature is not permitted on the ELA tests. The student may point to a word or phrase and request the word to be read aloud or signed. Test administrator quietly reads aloud or signs the selected word(s) or phrase; test administrator may not explain or define words. Students using this feature may be tested alongside other students in groups of any size.

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Accommodation Name and Number#	CBT Administration Considerations
UF12: Test administrator redirects a student's attention to the test	Test administrator redirects student's attention to the test without coaching or assisting the student to answer any questions (e.g., test administrator reminds student to stay focused; it is not permissible to say, "Add more to your response" or "Make sure to answer all questions."). The test administrator may prompt or redirect a student with a verbal or nonverbal cue that may or may not be part of their behavior plan. This UF may be beneficial for students with challenges with attention and impulse control.
UF13: Test administrator repeats or clarifies general administration directions	Test administrator repeats or clarifies general test administration directions from the appropriate TAM scripts to the student, as needed.
UF14: General masking	Students can mask certain parts of the test by selecting the mask from the toolbar menu at the bottom of the screen. The mask can be resized, moved around the screen, and closed.
UF15: Reverse Contrast	A student inverts the background and font color during testing based on need or preference. Students can invert all colors on screen based on the contrast selected.

Table 2. Universal Accessibility Features for Paper-Based Testing

Accommodation Name and Number#	PBT Administration Considerations
UF1: Highlighter/colored pencils	Colored pencils and yellow highlighters may be used, but students must use a #2 pencil only to answer all test questions.
UF2: Colored overlays or tinted lenses	Other methods to change the contrast of printed text may be used.
UF3: Magnification tool/ device or low-vision aid	Examples include handheld magnifiers or desktop/tabletop magnifiers.
UF4: Enlarged pencil/ modified writing instrument	Other adjustments to writing instruments and tools for recording responses may be used.
UF5: Tracking device	Examples include a straight edge or similar visual organizer.
UF6: Hiding options	Mask answer(s) using a blank card or cutout.
UF7: Use a pencil to eliminate answer choices in booklet	Students should take care not to eliminate answer bubble options, as stray marks will lead to an incorrect score.
UF8: Blank place marker	Students can use the blank place marker to mark a question for later review. (**Note:** Sticky notes are *not* allowed.)
UF9: Audio aid	Not available for PBT

Accommodation Name and Number#	PBT Administration Considerations
UF10: Scratch paper	Required for all students
UF11: Test administrator reads aloud/signs selected words	This feature is for Mathematics, STE, and Civics tests only as requested by the student; it is *not permitted* on the ELA tests.
	The student may point to a **word or phrase** and request the word to be read aloud or signed. Test administrator quietly reads aloud or signs the selected word(s) or phrase; test administrator may not explain or define words. Students using this feature may be tested alongside other students in groups of any size.
UF12: Test administrator redirects a student's attention to the test	Test administrators may not coach or assist the student in answering any questions (e.g., test administrator reminds student to stay focused; it is *not* permissible to say, "Add more to your response" or "Make sure to answer all questions.").
	The test administrator may prompt or redirect a student with a verbal or nonverbal cue that may or may not be part of their behavior plan. This UF may be beneficial for students with challenges with attention and impulse control.
UF13: Test administrator repeats or clarifies general administration directions	Test administrators read from the appropriate *Test Administrator's Manual* scripts to the student, as needed.
UF14: General masking	Students may use a blank paper/index card to mask test content.
UF15: Reverse contrast	Not applicable for paper-based testing, but students can use a colored overlay (refer to UF2)

B Designated Accessibility Features (DFs)

Most students will be tested in their regular classrooms according to the guidelines and schedule intended for all students. However, principals and test coordinators have the flexibility to test *any* student, including those without identified disabilities and non-ELs, using the designated accessibility features described in Table 3, as long as all requirements for testing conditions, test security, and staffing are met.

It is advisable, although not required, to include designated accessibility features in the IEP or 504 plan of a student with a disability who requires them.

Table 3. Designated Accessibility Features (Available to Any Student, at the Principal's Discretion)

Accommodation Name and Number#	Administration Considerations
DF1: Small group test administration	The group may include up to a total of 10 students. Students can be tested in a separate classroom or section within a larger room. This designated feature may be beneficial for students with challenges with attention or need other supports.
DF2: Individual (one-to-one) test administration	A student must be tested in a separate setting. This designated feature may be beneficial for students who require a one-student-to-one-test-administrator ratio due to specific accommodations such as a scribe or related support.

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Accommodation Name and Number#	Administration Considerations
DF3: Frequent brief supervised breaks	This designated feature may be beneficial for students who require multiple breaks to support sensory or stamina needs.
DF4: Separate or alternate test location	This designated feature allows for a group of one or more students. The separate location should be specified (e.g., library, homeroom).
DF5: Seating in a specific area of the general testing room, including the use of a study carrel	This designated feature may be beneficial for students who require a specific location within a general test setting, such as near the window, door, front, or rear of the testing room. If listed in an IEP or 504 plan, the specific area should be described. **Note:** DF5 is different from DF4, as DF5 is seating in a specific area in a general test administration setting. DF4 is an entirely separate location.
DF6: Adaptive or specialized furniture	E.g., a study carrel, special adaptive seating, a specific desk, lighting equipment
DF7: Noise buffer	E.g., noise-canceling earmuffs/headphones or white noise This designated feature may be beneficial for students who require a tool to block out background sound to improve focusing and attention. **Note:** Music or other recordings may not be played unless granted as a unique accommodation by DESE.
DF8: Familiar test administrator	If listed in an IEP or 504 plan, the specific familiar test administrator should be described (e.g., classroom special education teacher). This designated feature may be beneficial for students working with familiar educators for a variety of reasons such as difficulty with transitions or communication.
DF9: Student reads test aloud to self	This designated feature may be beneficial for students who need to read their test aloud for a variety of reasons such as improved comprehension and attention. The student must be tested in a separate setting unless a low-volume device (e.g., a Whisperphone) is used.
DF10: Specific time of day	This designated feature may be beneficial for students who need to test at specified times of the day (e.g., students who arrive at school later in the day due to health-related issues). **Note:** If the student must take MCAS tests outside of the regular school day, the school must request approval from DESE by emailing mcas@mass.gov.
DF11: "Stop Testing" policy	This designated feature may be beneficial for students who have skills inconsistent with grade-level testing demands, as evidenced during local assessments, and the student is not eligible for the MCAS-Alt. The student should be given the opportunity to attempt each test session. If the student does not appear to be responding to test questions after a period of 15–20 minutes, the test administrator may ask if the student is finished. If so, the test administrator may collect the student's test materials and the student can either sit quietly or be excused from the test setting.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System:
Principal's Administration Manual, Spring 2026

Part II: MCAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Ⓐ Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Information about the purpose of accommodations, eligibility and general requirements for accommodations, and updating IEPs and 504 plans can be found in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* (available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility).

1. Nondisclosure Acknowledgment Forms

Test administrators for students using certain accommodations must sign an MCAS Nondisclosure Acknowledgment prior to testing. The form is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/forms as well as Appendix E of this manual, and is required for the administration of the following accommodations:

A2, A3.1, A3.2, A3.3, A5, A6.1, A8, A10.1, A10.2, A11, A12, A13, A14, A15, SAA1.2, SAA2, SAA3.1, SAA3.2, SAA6, EL3.2, EL4.1, EL4.2

For more information refer to "Nondisclosure Acknowledgment Forms" on page 32.

2. Unique Accommodations Requests

If a student with a disability or an English learner requires an accommodation that is not listed in the following tables, the school may request approval from DESE to use a unique accommodation. Unique accommodations may **not** do any of the following:

- fundamentally change the test or the construct being measured by the test
- assist the student in obtaining the answers to test questions
- violate test security requirements

The school may request approval (via email) for the use of a unique accommodation by submitting the request to mcas@mass.gov **at least two weeks prior to testing**. If approved by DESE, the IEP or 504 plan of the student must include the approved unique accommodation.

3. Identifying Accommodations on the Student Registration

The following form-dependent accommodations must be assigned correctly before testing. If not assigned correctly, a student's test will need to be stopped and a new test will need to be set up, and the student may need to retake a portion of the test. More information about these accommodations is available in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal: Student Registration*. These accommodations are noted with a designation of "(FD)" in the tables that follow.

Form-dependent accommodations for CBT

- Screen Reader
- Spanish/English test edition
- Compatible Assistive Technology
- ASL video edition of the grade 10 Mathematics test and June high school Science tests
- Human Read-Aloud
- Human Signer

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Form-dependent accommodations for PBT

- Large print
- Braille
- Spanish/English test edition

Instructions for completing the Student Registration are available in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal: Student Registration*.

4. Description of MCAS Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Table 4 lists the MCAS accommodations available to students with disabilities for the computer-based test. Table 5 lists accommodations available for paper-based testing.

Note: Accommodations listed with the "(SR)" designation in the tables on the following pages must be identified in the Student Registration prior to the start of testing. Accommodations listed with the phrase "MCAS NDA required" indicate that test administrators must sign an MCAS nondisclosure acknowledgment form before administering the accommodation.

5. If a Student Refuses an Accommodation

If a student refuses to use an accommodation listed in their plan during testing, the school should document in writing that the student was offered an accommodation but refused it, and they should keep this documentation on file. The student should be told that the accommodation will remain available during testing if they need it. The student should **not** be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that they have refused an accommodation, nor should they be asked to waive their right to receive an accommodation that is listed in their IEP or 504 plan. An optional sample form for documenting a student's refusal of an accommodation is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/forms.

If the IEP team agrees that the listed accommodation is no longer needed by the student, the accommodation should be removed from the plan at the next scheduled meeting (or should be listed in the plan "as requested by the student"). Written approval must be obtained from the parent/guardian (or student over 18 years of age) for new or amended IEPs before a change in accommodations can go into effect.

Similarly, 504 plans must reflect only those accommodations that are required by the student, as determined by educators familiar with the student.

Table 4. Accommodations for Student with Disabilities – Computer-Based Testing

Accommodation Number and Usage	CBT Administration Considerations
A1: Paper-based test *(SR)*	N/A (For paper-based tests only)
A2: Large-print paper test *(SR)*, *(FD)* MCAS NDA required.	N/A (For paper-based tests only. Alternatively, for CBT, refer to UF3 and UF4 in Table 1 for using screen magnification and enlarged cursor/pointer tool.)
A3.1: Screen reader *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students who are blind or otherwise visually impaired may need to use specialized computer programs such as JAWS or NVDA, known as screen readers, to properly interact with computers. MCAS NDA required.	• A separate hard-copy braille edition test with the necessary tactile graphics **will** automatically be sent for this accommodation. • All responses must be entered onscreen, either by the student or test administrator. Additional steps in • Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal) • Appendix E of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations*
A3.2: Braille edition *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students who are blind or otherwise visually impaired may need materials presented in a braille format (refer to braille special instructions for additional information). MCAS NDA required.	N/A (For paper-based braille edition)
A3.3: Assistive technology *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students who are not blind may use a compatible program (such as Zoom Text, JAWS, or NVDA) to properly interact and make the computer accessible. MCAS NDA required.	• A separate hard-copy braille edition test **will *not* be** automatically sent; schools that need one should call the MCAS Service Center to request one. • All responses must be entered onscreen, either by the student or test administrator. • Additional steps in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal)
A4: Text-to-Speech for Math, STE and Civics tests (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Students with disabilities may require reading support for identified reading and attention difficulties. **Note:** Any student can have a word or phrase read aloud on Mathematics, STE, and Civics tests; only students with disabilities who need a significant amount of text read aloud should be considered for the text-to-speech accommodation.	• Students can play, pause, or stop audio, and can skip content by selecting specific portions of text to be read aloud. Students can adjust the volume and speed at which content is read aloud. • Human read-aloud and TTS provide the same accessibility support and can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified (e.g., "text-to-speech is preferable, but human reader is acceptable"). • TTS may be used either with headphones or without headphones in a separate setting. • Students should view the tutorial and take an online TTS practice test prior to testing. • **Note:** TTS for ELA is a **special access accommodation** (SAA1.1). Refer to Table 6 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

Accommodation Number and Usage	CBT Administration Considerations
A5: Human read-aloud for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students with disabilities may require reading support for identified reading and attention difficulties. The human read-aloud accommodation is also available for paper-based tests (refer to Table 5). Any student can have a word or phrase read aloud on Mathematics, STE, and Civics tests; therefore, only students with disabilities that need a significant amount of text read aloud should be considered for the human read-aloud accommodation. MCAS NDA required.	• Students should be tested in a group of no more than five. • Human read-aloud and TTS provide the same accessibility support and can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified (e.g., "text-to-speech is preferable, but human reader is acceptable"). • Schools may choose to have test administrators read the test over the student's shoulder or create test administrator logins so that test administrators can sign in to their own test and read it aloud. (Students will sign in and record responses using their student logins.) • For instructions on creating test administrator logins for human read-aloud, refer to section 8 in this appendix. • Also refer to Appendix D of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations*
A6.1: Human signer for Mathematics, STE, Civics and for ELA test questions (but not ELA reading passages) *(SR)*, *(FD)* The human signer accommodation is also available for paper-based tests (refer to Table 5). Students with disabilities that use ASL for communication may require ASL interpreting. MCAS NDA required.	• Schools may choose to have human signers use the student's test or create test administrator logins. If using test administrator logins, human signers will need their own computer to sign in to their own version of the test. (Students will sign in and record responses using their student logins.) • For instructions on creating test administrator logins for human signer, test coordinators should refer to section 8 in this appendix. • The test must be signed exactly as it appears. The signer may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meaning of words, intent of any test question, or how to respond to any test questions. The signer may finger-spell key words in addition to providing the sign for a term. The signer may sign emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text. • Students should be tested in a group of no more than five. • If preferred, selected words, phrases, or sections may be signed to the student, as requested, rather than signing the entire test. • **Signing the ELA reading passages** is a **special access accommodation** (SAA2). Refer to Table 6 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation.

Accommodation Number and Usage	CBT Administration Considerations
A6.1 continued	• **Previewing test content by human signers:** Under secure conditions supervised by the principal, human signers may review test materials up to four days prior to testing (unless given special permission for an earlier review). Test materials may not be removed from the school nor accessed online outside of the school.
A6.2: ASL video editions of the computer-based spring grade 10 Mathematics and June high school Science tests *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students with disabilities that use ASL for communication may require ASL interpreting.	• Students should be familiar with the ASL video player on the MCAS Student Kiosk, have viewed the tutorial, or have taken the **online ASL practice tests** with the features of the ASL video player. • Students may turn on, turn off, pause, and control the signing speed of the ASL video. • Additional steps in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal)
A7: Human signer for test directions Students with disabilities that use ASL for communication may require a human signer to interpret directions that would be read aloud.	The human signer interprets and signs **the test directions only** (from the appropriate TAM scripts).
A8: Track student progress Students requiring this accommodation may have attention challenges and require supports and redirection to participate in multi-page assessments. MCAS NDA required.	The test administrator closely monitors the student and prompts the student to proceed to the next test item.
A9: Graphic organizer or supplemental reference sheet *(SR)* Students with disabilities may need organizational or reference supports to recall previously learned materials in order to produce responses.	• Only the approved ELA and civics organizers and supplemental mathematics reference sheets made available by DESE (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/ accessibility/organizers) may be used as is, with removed text, or printed on larger paper for these subject area MCAS tests. • Exception: ELA graphic organizers *without* text (e.g., paper with only lines, arrows, boxes, dots) **may be used without** DESE approval by students who have this accommodation. • For STE, students may use a sample reference sheet, or schools may submit a customized reference sheet for DESE approval. • Individualized STE reference sheets must be submitted for approval each school year using DESE's Cover Sheet (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/ accessibility/reference/ste-acc-coversheet.pdf)

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Accommodation Number and Usage	CBT Administration Considerations
A10.1: Scribe responses for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Often for students with motor, processing, or expressive language difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm). MCAS NDA required.	• A test administrator records the student's responses verbatim (i.e., as dictated or signed by the student) *at the time of testing*, either on the computer-based test or in the student's paper-based test. • DESE approval is not required for using a scribe with a 504 plan that is under development for a student with a recent injury.
A10.2: Speech-to-text for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Often for students with motor, processing, or expressive language difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) and are familiar with using speech-to-text/dictation programs. MCAS NDA required.	• A speech-to-text accommodation provides the same access as a human scribe, and the two can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified. • If the student will use both scribe and speech-to-text on one test, schools should select speech-to-text during Student Registration or in the MCAS Portal user interface instead of human scribe. • Students who use speech-to-text will need Whisperphones unless they are tested individually in a separate setting.
A11: Responses recorded on special paper or specialized device Students with disabilities may require special paper (e.g. large size, colored) or specialized device to generate responses. MCAS NDA required.	• Responses **must be transcribed** into the student's computer-based test by a test administrator *anytime during the testing window*. • **Students who transcribe** their own responses must do so *during the test session* and must finish on the day in which the test session began. • Refer to section 9 of this appendix for guidelines on transcribing student responses.
A12: Typed responses	N/A (For paper-based tests only)
A13: Student records responses on a device (other than a smartphone) for the purpose of playing back and transcribing the recorded segment(s) MCAS NDA required.	• A student records responses on the recording device and reviews the information prior to entering the response in the computer-based test. • Students that use stand-alone text-to-speech software or an audio recording device to listen to their draft response should also have accommodation A11 listed in their IEP or 504 plan. • Responses must be deleted from the device once they have been transcribed into the student's test.
A14: Responses signed onto video (for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of Hearing) MCAS NDA required.	A student records responses on the recording device and reviews the information prior to entering the response in the computer-based test. The video must be deleted after the response is entered.
A15: Monitor placement of student responses Students requiring this accommodation may have attention or visual challenges and require supports to correctly transpose or select their intended responses. MCAS NDA required.	The test administrator closely monitors the student and prompts the student to record their responses correctly onscreen.

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Accommodation Number and Usage	CBT Administration Considerations
A16: Refreshable braille display/braille note-taker Students who use braille may need an external braille device that is connected to a computer. This device uses the screen reader form to navigate the computer and to have any text read to them. The refreshable braille display is adding the braille to the audio output so the user can easily check spelling and formatting.	• With the assistance of the student's test administrator, the student to the screen reader form of the MCAS test and uses the refreshable braille display. • The student may require intermittent support from the test administrator to enter responses. • A separate hard-copy braille edition test with the appropriate braille graphics **will** automatically be sent for this accommodation.
A17: Braille Writer or Note-taker for paper-based Braille tests (external devices)	N/A (For paper-based tests only)
A18: Word Prediction for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Some students with disabilities may require word prediction support to generate written responses.	• Students are assigned the word prediction accommodation in the Student Registration and the student uses the word prediction tool during the test session. • **Note:** Word Prediction for ELA is a special access accommodation (SAA6).

Table 5. Accommodations for Student with Disabilities – Paper-Based Testing

Accommodation Number and Usage	PBT Administration Considerations
A1: Paper-based test *(SR)* Students with disabilities may require a paper-based version of classroom materials and tests due to challenges associated with their disability (e.g., student has mobility challenges and is unable to use a computer independently).	Standard paper-based materials; all tests are presented in a combined test & answer booklet, which contains the test questions as well as where the answer space. (Exception: Spanish/English tests contain separate test booklets and answer documents.) Refer to details in Appendix B.
A2: Large-print paper test *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students with disabilities may require a large print test material to support a variety of visual needs. MCAS NDA required.	• Large-print materials will be presented as approximately 25-point font size on 8.5" x 11" paper (i.e., a standard-sized test booklet). • Large-print special instructions will accompany the large-print test. • Either the student or the test administrator must transcribe the student's responses verbatim from the large-print test & answer booklet into the standard test & answer booklet and return it according to instructions in the PAM so the student will receive credit. (Refer to additional procedures listed in section 8 of this appendix.) • Additional steps can be found in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal)
A3.1: Screen reader *(SR)*	N/A (For computer-based tests only)

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Accommodation Number and Usage	PBT Administration Considerations
A3.2: Braille edition *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students who are blind or otherwise visually impaired may need materials presented in a braille format. MCAS NDA required.	• All answers must be either scribed or transcribed verbatim into a standard test & answer booklet and returned according to instructions in the PAM so the student will receive credit. (Refer to additional procedures listed in section 9 of this appendix.) • Braille special instructions will accompany the braille test. • Additional steps can be found in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal)
A3.3: Assistive technology *(SR)*, *(FD)*	N/A (For computer-based tests only)
A4: Text-to-Speech for MCAS Math, STE and Civics tests *(SR)*	N/A (For computer-based tests only)
A5: Human read-aloud for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students with disabilities may require reading support for identified reading and attention difficulties. Any student can have a word or phrase read aloud on Mathematics, STE, and Civics tests; only students with disabilities that need a significant amount of text read aloud should be considered for the human read-aloud accommodation. MCAS NDA required.	• The student should be tested in a group of no more than five students. • For additional procedures, including instructions on creating test administrator logins, refer to section 8 in this appendix.
A6.1: Human signer for Mathematics, STE, Civics and for ELA test questions (but *not* ELA reading passages) *(SR)*, *(FD)* Students with disabilities who use ASL for communication may require ASL interpreting. MCAS NDA required.	• The test must be signed exactly as it appears. The signer may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meaning of words, intent of any test question, or how to respond to any test questions. The signer may finger-spell key words in addition to providing the sign for a term. The signer may sign emphasis only when indicated by bold or italicized text. • The test must be administered either individually or to a small group of 2–5 students receiving the human signer accommodation. • If preferred, selected words, phrases, or sections may be signed to the student, as requested, rather than signing the entire test. • **Signing the ELA reading passages** is a special access accommodation (SAA2). Refer to Table 6 for guidelines and criteria to receive this accommodation.

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Accommodation Number and Usage	PBT Administration Considerations
A6.1 continued	• **Previewing test content by human signers**: Under secure conditions supervised by the principal, human signers may review test materials up to four days prior to testing (unless given special permission for an earlier review). Test materials may not be removed from the school nor accessed online outside of the school.
A6.2: ASL video editions *(SR)*, *(FD)*	N/A (For computer-based tests only)
A7: Human signer for test directions Students with disabilities that use ASL for communication may require a human signer to interpret directions that would be read aloud.	The human signer interprets and signs **the test directions only** (from the appropriate TAM scripts).
A8: Track student progress Students requiring this accommodation may have attention challenges and require supports and redirection to participate in multi-page assessments. MCAS NDA required.	The test administrator closely monitors the student and prompts the student to proceed to the next test item.
A9: Graphic organizer or supplemental reference sheet *(SR)* Students with disabilities may need organizational or reference supports to recall previously learned materials in order to produce responses.	• Only the approved ELA and civics organizers and supplemental mathematics reference sheets made available by DESE (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/organizers) may be used as is, with removed text, or printed on larger paper for these subject area MCAS tests. • Exception: ELA graphic organizers *without* text (e.g., paper with only lines, arrows, boxes, dots) **may be used without** DESE approval by students who have this accommodation. • For STE, students may use a sample reference sheet, or schools may submit a customized reference sheet for DESE approval. • Individualized STE reference sheets must be submitted for approval each school year using DESE's Cover Sheet (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility/reference/ste-acc-coversheet.pdf).
A10.1: Scribe responses for Mathematics, STE, and Civics *(not* ELA) *(SR)* Often for students with motor, processing, or expressive language difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm). MCAS NDA required.	• A test administrator records the student's responses verbatim (i.e., as dictated or signed by the student) *at the time of testing*, either on the computer-based test or in the student's paper-based test. • DESE approval is not required for using a scribe with a 504 plan that is under development for a student with a recent injury.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

Accommodation Number and Usage	PBT Administration Considerations
A10.2: Speech-to-text for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Often for students with motor, processing, or expressive language difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) and are familiar with using speech-to-text/dictation programs. MCAS NDA required.	• A speech-to-text accommodation provides the same access as a human scribe, and the two can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified. • If the student will use both scribe and speech-to-text on one test, schools should select speech-to-text during Student Registration or in the MCAS Portal user interface instead of human scribe. • All answers must be either **scribed** or **transcribed** verbatim into the student's standard booklet and returned according to instructions in the PAM so the student will receive credit. (Refer to additional procedures in section 9 of this appendix.) • Students who use speech-to-text will need Whisperphones unless they are tested individually in a separate setting.
A11: Responses recorded on special paper or specialized device Students with disabilities may require special paper (e.g. large size, colored) or specialized device to generate responses. MCAS NDA required.	• Responses **must be transcribed** into the student's test & answer booklet by a test administrator *anytime during the testing window.* • **Students who transcribe** their own responses must do so *during the test session* and must finish on the day in which the test session began. • Refer to section 9 of this appendix for guidelines on transcribing student responses.
A12: Typed responses MCAS NDA required.	• Responses must be printed out, one per page, and inserted in the student's test & answer booklet with all required header information typed on each page (see section 10 in this appendix). • Schools should not transcribe students' responses into their test & answer booklet. • After being printed, responses **must** be deleted from the device.
A13: Student records responses on a device (other than a smartphone) for the purpose of playing back and transcribing the recorded segment(s) MCAS NDA required.	• A student records responses on the recording device and reviews the information prior to entering the response in the paper-based test. • Students who use stand-alone text-to-speech software or an audio recording device to listen to their draft response should also have accommodation A11 listed in their IEP or 504 plan. • Responses **must** be deleted from the device once they have been transcribed into the student's test.
A14: Responses signed onto video (for a student who is Deaf or Hard-of Hearing) MCAS NDA required.	• A student records responses on the recording device and reviews the information prior to entering the response in the test & answer booklet. • The video **must** be deleted after the response is entered.

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Accommodation Number and Usage	PBT Administration Considerations
A15: Monitor placement of student responses Students requiring this accommodation may have attention or visual challenges and require supports to correctly transpose or select their intended responses. MCAS NDA required.	The test administrator closely monitors the student and prompts them to record their responses correctly onscreen.
A16: Braille note-taker (specific external device used in conjunction with hard-copy braille test) The student may require intermittent support from the test administrator to enter responses.	Braille notes should be placed in the school's return shipment.
A17: Braille writer (specific external device used in conjunction with the hard-copy braille test) With the assistance of the student's test administrator, the student uses the braille writer or notetaker to produce responses. The student may require intermittent support from the test administrator to enter responses.	A printout of each response may be generated and inserted in the student's test & answer booklet, with all required information on each page. (Refer to details in Appendix B.)
A18: Word Prediction for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* Some students with disabilities may require word prediction support to generate written responses.	• Refer to Appendix E of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* when planning to use a school-owned word prediction application for paper-based testing. • Test administrators for students using accommodation A18 must sign an MCAS Nondisclosure Acknowledgment before administering this accommodation. • **Note:** Word Prediction for ELA is a special access accommodation (SAA6).

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

6.   *Special Access Accommodations* **for Students with Disabilities**

Special access accommodations are intended for use by a **very small number of students with significant delays in word decoding/reading, writing, or performing basic numerical calculations** who would not otherwise be able to access the test because a disability severely limits or prevents them from performing the skill in question. Teams must exercise caution when considering whether a student requires a special access accommodation, since these accommodations alter part of what the test is designed to measure. Teams must carefully review the guidelines and criteria described for each special access accommodation listed in Table 6.

Test results for students who take the test using special access accommodations should be interpreted with caution. Parents/guardians and schools should not infer that the student has expertise in the skill being accommodated. A notation will accompany the results of students who use a special access accommodation.

DESE continues to review each district's rate of use of special access accommodations.

Although test accommodations should generally be consistent with accommodations used for instruction, the use of a special access accommodation during instruction does not automatically qualify a student to receive the same accommodation on an MCAS test, unless the student meets the guidelines and criteria described in Table 6 and on the following pages.

IEP and 504 teams should make consistent, appropriate, and defensible decisions regarding the use of special access accommodations for each student, based on locally administered diagnostic assessments. Teams should amend the IEPs and 504 plans of students who have been previously designated for special access accommodations, but do not meet the criteria listed in Table 6.

Schools should be careful to provide special access accommodations only to students who are entitled to them. Students who receive these accommodations but do not have them listed in their IEPs **are likely to have their tests invalidated**.

Table 6. Special Access Accommodations for Student with Disabilities

Accommodation Number and Usage	Administration Considerations
SAA1.1: Text-to-Speech (TTS) for ELA *(SR)* and **SAA1.2: Human Read-Aloud for ELA** *(SR)***,** *(FD)* These accommodations are intended for a very small number of students with disabilities resulting in substantial reading deficits. To receive the text-to-speech or human read-aloud accommodation for ELA, the student must meet **all** of the following criteria: • demonstrate substantial reading deficits (not simply reading below grade level) as evidenced by performance in the Low Range/Extremely Below Benchmarks on administered assessments • be considered a functional nonreader (e.g., the student cannot read basic text independently) • receive ongoing intervention to learn the skill of reading • use this accommodation routinely (except during instruction in learning to read) • Refer to Case Examples for Determining MCAS Accessibility and Accommodations (to be posted on the DESE website) for additional guidance. MCAS NDA required.	• For TTS, test takers can play, pause, or stop audio, and can skip content by selecting specific portions of text to be read aloud. Test takers can adjust the volume and speed at which content is read aloud. • For students who require that text be read aloud, IEP teams should consider whether TTS is preferable to a human reader (or vice versa). Human read-aloud and TTS provide the same accessibility support and can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified (e.g., "text-to-speech is preferable, but human reader is acceptable"). • For computer-based testing, schools may choose to have test administrators read the test over the student's shoulder or may create test administrator logins so that test administrators can log in to their own test and read aloud from their own device. • For instructions on creating test administrator logins for human read-aloud, refer to section 8 in this appendix. • TTS may be used either with headphones or without headphones in a separate setting. • Students should view the tutorial and take an online TTS practice test prior to testing.
SAA2: Human Signer for ELA *(SR), (FD)* This accommodation is intended for students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing and who are severely limited or prevented from reading, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations. The student must meet all the following criteria: • be virtually unable to read (i.e., decode text), even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is at the very beginning stages of learning to read, and not simply reading below grade level), due to a documented disability and/or history of early and prolonged lack of exposure to and use of language • use this accommodation routinely, except during reading instruction • receive ongoing intervention to learn the skill MCAS NDA required.	• The student must be tested in a group of no more than five students, unless approval is obtained from DESE to increase the group size in rare circumstances. • Schools may choose to have the human signer sign from the student's test or create test administrator logins. If using test administrator logins, human signers can log in to their own test and sign from their own device. • For instructions on creating test administrator logins for human signer, refer to section 8 in this appendix. • Additional steps in Part III of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal* (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal)

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

Accommodation Number and Usage	Administration Considerations
SAA3.1: Scribe responses for ELA *(SR)* This accommodation is intended for students who have the following: • documented significant motor difficulties or difficulties producing writing • a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that makes it difficult to produce responses. MCAS NDA required.	• A human scribe will record the student's responses verbatim (i.e., as dictated by the student) *at the time of testing*. • A human scribe and speech-to-text (SAA3.2) provide the same access and can be used interchangeably if the student is familiar with speech-to-text features. • The student should be allowed to develop planning notes via the scribe and to view the scribed material. • The student must be tested in a separate setting.
SAA3.2: Speech-to-text for ELA *(SR)* Students use a speech recognition program that converts voice to written text. This accommodation is intended for students who have the following: • documented significant motor or processing difficulties • a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that makes it difficult to produce responses. MCAS NDA required.	• Students taking the computer-based test will be able to use an embedded speech-to-text tool that functions within MCAS Student Kiosk. This embedded assistive technology will allow students to dictate their responses directly into the computer-based test without using a separate adjacent (external) device. • Refer to Appendix E of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* for a step-by-step guide on accessing and using this feature. • If students use their own AT devices, all assessment content must be deleted from these devices after the test for security purposes. • Students who use speech-to-text will need Whisperphones, unless they are tested individually in a separate setting.
SAA4: Calculator device (including addition/subtraction or multiplication/division tables) on a ***noncalculator session*** for Mathematics tests *(SR)* This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with documented disabilities that **severely limit or prevent them from performing basic calculations** without a calculation device or other mathematics tool, as documented in locally administered diagnostic evaluations, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so. The student must meet all of the following criteria: • be **virtually unable to calculate** (i.e., unable to perform single-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division without a calculation device or other mathematics tool) • use the calculation device or tool during routine instruction in mathematics • receive ongoing intervention to learn the skill	Students taking the computer-based test will be able to use an embedded calculator (or a handheld calculator).

Accommodation Number and Usage	Administration Considerations
SAA5: Spell checker for ELA *(SR)* This accommodation is intended for a small number of students with disabilities that **severely limit or prevent them from spelling correctly**, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so. The student must meet all of the following criteria: • be **unable to spell simple words** (i.e., at the beginning stages of learning how to spell), as documented by locally administered diagnostic evaluations • produce understandable written work only when provided this accommodation, which the student uses during routine instruction	The student may not use grammar check or access the internet during the test.
SAA6: Word Prediction for ELA *(SR)* This accommodation is intended for a small number of students who meet the following criteria: • have a disability that results in significant challenges to generate written responses • requires access to word prediction to produce basic written expression commensurate with the student's skills MCAS NDA required.	• Students using this accommodation will be able to use an embedded word prediction tool in the MCAS Student Kiosk. • Refer to Appendix E of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* for a step-by-step guide on accessing and using this feature.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

7. Procedures for Students Who Use a Cell Phone or Smartwatch to Monitor Medical Information

For students with medical conditions who use a cell phone or smartwatch to monitor their health (e.g., a student with diabetes who uses a continuous glucose monitor [CGM] or insulin pump, or a student with a heart condition who uses a heart monitor), DESE recommends that the school test coordinator consult with the school nurse, and that the school nurse follow the student's Individual Health Care Plan and/or 504 plan/IEP in regard to remote medical monitoring.

A student may have a cell phone or smartwatch with them during testing in order to monitor medical information, **provided that the student is tested in a small group (no more than 10 students) or individually** so that the test administrator can closely monitor the student and ensure that the device is not used for any other purpose.

8. Procedures for Using Test Accommodations A5, A6.1, SAA1.2, SAA2, and EL3.2: Human Read-Aloud or Human Signer

The test administrator may read the test aloud or sign the test to a small group of students, provided that each student has an IEP, 504 plan, or EL plan that lists either accommodation A5/A6.1/EL3.2 (for Mathematics, Science, or Civics) or special access accommodation SAA1.2/SAA2 (for the ELA tests). Reading the ELA tests aloud to a student who is not entitled to special access accommodation SAA1.2 will result in the student's test results being invalidated, so be sure that any students receiving that accommodation are eligible.

The procedures below must be followed:

- No more than five students may be grouped together for reading tests aloud or signing the tests, since students typically proceed through the test at different rates.
- Refer to the appendices in the CBT TAM for instructions on how to administer these accommodations for computer-based testing.
- For CBT, test administrators may read over a student's shoulder, or a school may create test administrator logins.
- For PBT, student booklets may not be opened or reviewed by students or test administrators prior to testing.
- For PBT, test administrators should read aloud to the students using a booklet from the school's shipment; the shipment includes an overage and all booklets will be the same test form.

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Setting up Human Read-Aloud/Human Signer Sessions with Test Administrator Logins

The test administrator login will allow the test administrator to sign in to the test on the MCAS Student Kiosk to see the same test questions that their students see, to be able to read aloud or sign the test to their students. **Responses should not be entered using a test administrator login; all test administrator login tests will be voided at the end of testing.**

1. There are two options for creating a test administrator login in the MCAS Portal.

    Option 1: Manually add a student to the MCAS Portal on the Students page using the field definitions outlined below.

    Option 2: Add the test administrator login as a student during the Student Registration file upload.

    Test administrator logins should use the following field definitions. Any fields not listed below should be left blank.

Column of Student Registration file	Field Name	Field notes
A	District code	The testing district
B	School code	The testing school
C	SASID	Begin with your 8-digit school code. Add "01", "02", etc. to the end of your school code for each test administrator login needed. Example: For a school whose code is 77665555, their test administrator login SASIDs would be 7766555501, 7766555502, 7766555503, etc.
D	Student grade	The grade level for the test that is being administered
E	Last name	Enter in "TA LOGIN"
F	First name	The test administrator's first name
I	Date of birth	Enter in "01/01/1900"
J	Test code	The test code for the test that is being administered
L	Test format	"O"
Select Y for one of the following if administering the Human Read Aloud accommodation:		
T	Human Read Aloud Standard	"Y" if administering Math, STE, or Civics
Z	Human Read Aloud Special	"Y" if administering ELA
Select Y for one of the following if administering the Human Signer accommodation:		
U	Human Signer Standard	"Y" if administering Math, STE, or Civics
AA	Human Signer Special	"Y" if administering ELA

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2. Once the test administrator logins have been added to the MCAS Portal, create a class for the students requiring a human read aloud or human signer accommodation for that content area. Refer to additional information on creating classes in Part V of the *Guide to the MCAS Portal: Creating and Managing Classes*, available on the MCAS Resource Center (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal).

    a. Add the appropriate student(s) to the class.

    b. Add the test administrator login to the class.

    c. Save the class.

3. Schedule the class to take the appropriate test. Refer to additional information on scheduling tests in the *Guide to the MCAS Portal*, available on the MCAS Resource Center (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/portal).

Instructions on Using Test Administrator Logins: During and After Testing

1. Ensure all students, including the test administrator login, are assigned the human read aloud (or human signer) accommodated form.

    To view the form a student or test administrator is assigned to for a test, navigate to the Test Scheduling page in the Administration section of the MCAS Portal. Then select the organization, program, content area, and test from the selection drop-down, the list will update to show classes scheduled for the selected test. Then select the View Details/Student Logins link for the class scheduled, view the forms on the Scheduled Tests details page under the Form Name column for each student, as shown in the screenshot below.

	Last Name ▾	First Name	Username	Password	Form Name	Date/Time Created	Test Report Code	Status
☐	Student	James	1888446157	2yadhhfs	MAT08-HumanSigner-Form1	11/18/2024 4:12:58 PM	✚	Session 1:Not Started
☐	Student	Steven	3557280177	hkuz3qyf	MAT08-HumanReadAloud-Form1	11/18/2024 4:12:58 PM	✚	Session 1:Not Started

2. After testing, school test coordinators should void the test administrator login tests.

9. Guidelines for Scribing and Transcribing Student Responses

Administering the Human Scribe Accommodation

*   A scribe may administer this accommodation only to **one student at a time** during a test session. The student must be tested in a separate setting.

*   If scribing responses into a paper-based booklet, the scribe must produce legible text. For computer-based tests, the scribe will type directly into the student's computer-based test.

*   The scribe must transcribe the student's responses verbatim and may not prompt, correct, or question the student regarding the content of the responses.

*   The scribe may request that the student restate (or sign) words, phrases, or sentences, as needed. The scribe may not edit or alter the student's dictated response in any way.

*   A student using a scribe must be given the same opportunities as other students to plan and draft a written response. The scribe may write an outline, plan, or draft as directed by the student, and must record the draft response or outline exactly as dictated.

Additional Guidance for Scribing ELA Tests (SAA3.1)

- The scribe will spell all words correctly.

- The scribe will assume all sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a period. Other than that, at the beginning of a sentence the scribe should request clarification from the student about the use of capitalization and punctuation. The scribe must also allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written.

- The scribe will orally confirm spelling of homonyms and commonly confused homophones, e.g., *than* and *then*; *to*, *two*, and *too*; *there*, *their*, and *they're*.

- After the student has finished dictating their response(s), the scribe must do the following:

  › ask the student to review the draft and make any necessary edits, including capitalization, punctuation, and paragraph breaks.

  › either allow the student to make edits independently or have the student direct the scribe to make the edits.

  › not assist the student in making decisions during the editing process.

- The scribe will make student requested changes, even if incorrect.

- The student will confirm the correctness of the response.

Transcribing Student Responses

Circumstances may occur during test administration that may require a test administrator to **transcribe** a student's responses onscreen or in their test & answer booklet. These situations may include the following:

- Answers were recorded in an incorrectly assigned computer-based test or test & answer booklet, or in the wrong section of a test.

- A student took the test using a special test format requiring that answers be transcribed; e.g., braille or large-print. (Braille responses must be transcribed by persons fluent in braille.)

- A student used speech-to-text software, or augmentative communication, or an assistive technology device **that is not compatible with the MCAS Student Kiosk** and printed their responses for transcription by a test administrator.

- A student recorded answers on blank paper as an accommodation, instead of in the computer-based test or test & answer booklet.

- The test & answer booklet or document became unusable (e.g., torn, wrinkled, or contaminated).

If a student's responses must be transcribed after test administration is completed, the following steps must be followed:

- At least two persons must be present during the transcription of student responses. At least one of the individuals must be an authorized test administrator; the other should be the principal or the principal's designee.

- One of these persons will be the transcriber, and the other will be an observer confirming the accuracy of the transcription.

- The student's response must be transcribed verbatim into the booklet or computer-based test.

- The student's original printed responses must either be securely shredded or be placed in the school's return shipment.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

10. Procedures for Submitting Typed Responses for Paper-Based Testing (Accommodation A12)

General Information

A student's response to each test question (including all sub-parts — e.g., a, b, c, d) must be submitted entirely using one of the following methods:

- typed on paper and inserted inside the front cover of the student's booklet;
- written by the student; or
- transcribed into the student's test & answer booklet (if the student also used accommodation A10/A10.2, SAA3.2, or EL4.1/4.2).

All of the responses for an individual student do not need to be submitted using the same method. **Regardless of which method is used, submit only one response per question.**

Only responses to constructed-response, short-answer, and essay questions may be submitted as typed responses. A student's responses to multiple-choice questions must be marked in the student's standard booklet.

Any draft responses are to be marked "DRAFT" and placed in the return shipment.

Before Test Administration

1. Provide a standard booklet along with appropriate tracking documents to each test administrator.

2. Ensure that test administrators understand and follow the instructions in the PBT TAM regarding the following:
   - security information, including the prohibition against students accessing the internet
   - formatting requirements (Refer to requirements below and the template at the end of this appendix. Also refer to Appendix C in the PBT TAM for further instructions.)
   - instructions for submitting a typed response for the Mathematics or Science administrations for students using a graphic in their response to a question
   - scripts in the TAM to be read aloud to students

3. Disable access to the internet from the student's device. If a student will be using an electronic tablet, please contact DESE prior to testing.

Formatting Requirements

- Use a font size between 8-point (minimum) and 12-point (maximum).
- Set margins to be one inch.
- Set line-spacing to be single-spaced.

IMPORTANT—Page limits:

For ELA responses:

- The booklets will indicate the number of pages available for written responses. Do not exceed these page limits.

For Mathematics, Science, and Civics responses:

- Submit a separate page for each constructed-response or short-answer question.
- A maximum of one page may be submitted for each response.

After Test Administration

A student's responses to multiple-choice questions cannot be submitted as typed responses. Instead, they must be marked by the student or transcribed into the standard booklet. **Otherwise, the student will not receive credit.**

1. Fill in all information requested on the front and back covers of the student's standard booklet, including the circle for accommodation A12 on the back cover.

2. Refer to Appendix C in the PBT TAM for instructions on preparing typed responses for submission.

3. Mark drafts of typed responses "DRAFT" and place them in the return shipment.

4. Ensure that all student responses are deleted from the computer by test administrators according to the instructions in the TAM.

5. Submit the standard booklet according to the instructions in Appendix B of this manual.

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Sample MCAS Typed Response Template

Student Name: Jonathan Ward
Student SASID: 1012345678
Booklet Serial Number*: 1234567890
Subject: English Language Arts
Question Number: 35

In this area, the student will type the response to the test question.

For more information, see the formatting requirements in this appendix.

* (located on the lower right corner of the test & answer booklet or answer booklet front cover)

Part III: Testing Procedures and Accommodations for EL Students

Ⓐ Participation Requirements for EL Students

Federal law requires that students identified as ELs in grades 3–8 must participate in all MCAS tests scheduled for their grade, regardless of the language program or services they are receiving or the amount of time they have been in the United States, with one exception: ELA testing is optional for ELs who enrolled in U.S. schools **after March 1, 2025**, and who were not reported in the March 2025 SIMS report. If a first-year EL participates in ELA testing, results are reported for diagnostic purposes only.

Grade 10 EL students must participate in ELA testing, with the same exceptions for first-year ELs as noted above. Grade 10 ELs must also participate in the grade 10 Mathematics test. EL students in high school must participate in one of the high school Science tests by the end of grade 10.

Table 7. EL Participation Requirements for Spring 2026 MCAS Tests

Student Status	Participation in MCAS ELA Testing	Participation in MCAS Mathematics Testing	Participation in MCAS Science Testing (grades 5 and 8 and high school)	Participation in MCAS Civics Testing (grade 8)
First-year EL Students[5]	Optional[6]	Required	Required	Required
All other students	Required	Required	Required	Required

Questions regarding the **identification screening, placement, and reclassification of EL students** should be directed to the Office of Language Acquisition at el@doe.mass.edu.

Ⓑ Use of Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries and Glossaries by EL Students on MCAS Tests

EL students, including those who have ever been identified as ELs in the past, but are no longer reported as ELs, may use an authorized bilingual word-to-word dictionary or glossary on the following MCAS tests:

- ELA—authorized word-to-word dictionary (if available)
- Mathematics—authorized word-to-word dictionary and glossary (if available)
- Science—authorized word-to-word dictionary and glossary (if available)
- Civics—authorized word-to-word dictionary (if available)

Bilingual dictionary and glossary use for MCAS tests is limited to those that provide word-to-word translations. Dictionaries and glossaries that include definitions, synonyms, antonyms, phrases, sample sentences, handwritten notes, and other information are prohibited.

Schools are strongly encouraged to provide word-to-word dictionaries and glossaries for students who do not bring their own to the test administration.

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[5] Results for first-year EL students are not included in MCAS school and district summary results.
[6] Optional, provided that the student has participated in WIDA ACCESS testing.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

A list of authorized bilingual dictionaries and glossaries is available on DESE's website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility. To discuss the approval of a word-to-word dictionary not included in the list, please call 781-338-3625.

Refer to the "Policy on Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries/Glossaries for ELs during MCAS Testing" on page 36 of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* (posted at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/accessibility) for information about using electronic bilingual word-to-word dictionaries for MCAS testing.

C Accommodations for EL Students

In addition to universal features and designated features available to all students, the accommodations listed in Table 8 are available to all ELs, either with or without disabilities, on MCAS tests.

Note that **some** EL accommodations must be **requested in advance** in the Student Registration and are designated with an "SR" in the table below. Additionally, some EL accommodations are form-dependent and must be assigned correctly before testing. These accommodations are noted with the designation (FD). The names of accommodations and the process for their selection are identical to accommodations for students with disabilities, although the EL accommodations have a unique code (e.g., EL1).

Table 8. Accommodations for Students Who Are ELs

Accommodation Number and Usage	Administration Considerations
EL1: Paper-based test *(SR)* ELs in their first year of schooling in the U.S. or ELs with little or no familiarity with technology may take the MCAS paper-based test as an accommodation.	• ELs should have the opportunity to take computer-based practice tests prior to selecting the paper-based test. • Administering the ELA test to a first-year EL is optional.
EL2: Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary and Glossary (English/home language) This accommodation is available to students who are currently or were ever reported as EL. (CBT and PBT)	• Paper bilingual word-to-word dictionaries and glossaries are permitted during MCAS testing. Schools should make sure that EL students are familiar with, and comfortable using, paper editions. • Schools that currently use e-book versions, such as from wordtoword.com, in regular instruction and classroom assessments may use them during MCAS testing.
EL3.1: Text-to-speech for Mathematics, STE and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* (CBT only)	• TTS and human read-aloud provide the same accessibility support and can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified. • TTS is in English only.
EL3.2: Human read-aloud for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR), (FD)* MCAS NDA required. (CBT and PBT)	• The test must be administered in a separate setting either individually or to a group of no more than five students. • For further information, refer to section 8 in this appendix.

Accommodation Number and Usage	Administration Considerations
EL4.1: Scribe responses for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* MCAS NDA required. (CBT and PBT)	• The human scribe will record student's responses *verbatim* at the time of testing. • For specific guidance on providing the scribe accommodation, refer to section 9 of this appendix.
EL4.2: Speech-to-text for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* MCAS NDA required. (CBT only)	Speech-to-text and human scribe accommodations provide the same accessibility support and can be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified.
EL5: Test administrator reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies general test administration directions (CBT and PBT)	The test administrator reads from the appropriate scripts in the TAM.
EL6: Test administrator reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies general administration directions *in student's home language* (CBT and PBT)	The test administrator reads from the appropriate scripts in the TAM.
EL7: Spanish/English edition for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)*, *(FD)* Spanish/English tests are intended for Spanish-speaking ELs who have been in the U.S. less than three years. The computer-based tests consist of stacked text, Spanish text above English text; paper-based tests consist of Spanish and English on facing pages (side-by-side). (CBT and PBT)	• Students may respond either in Spanish or English. (Note that for all other MCAS tests, students may respond only in English.) • When signing in to the computer-based Spanish/English test, students may select the language (Spanish or English) in which they would like to see the MCAS Student Kiosk icons and directions. This selection is made prior to entering the test.
EL8: Word prediction for Mathematics, STE, and Civics (*not* ELA) *(SR)* This tool provides a choice of frequently used words after the student types the first few letters of a word.	• Refer to Appendix E of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual for the 2025–26 MCAS Test Administrations* when planning to use a school-owned word prediction application for paper-based testing. • Test administrators for students using accommodation EL8 must sign an MCAS Nondisclosure Acknowledgment before administering this accommodation.

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

Table 9 provides guidance regarding the suitability of EL accommodations based on the English language proficiency (ELP) level of the student. The table correlates the ELP level with the approximate ACCESS level.

Table 9. Selecting Accommodations for ELs Based on English Proficiency Level

Accommodation	Beginning ELP *ACCESS Level 1–2*	Intermediate ELP *ACCESS Level 2–mid-3*	Advanced ELP *ACCESS Level mid-3–above*
EL1	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL2	May *not* be appropriate	Recommended	May be appropriate
EL3.1 and EL3.2	May be appropriate	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL4.1 and EL 4.2	Recommended	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL5	Recommended	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL6	Recommended	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL7	Recommended	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate
EL8	Recommended	May be appropriate	May *not* be appropriate

Part IV: Lists of MCAS Accessibility Features and Accommodations

The tables below present lists of all MCAS accessibility features and accommodations, as well as the corresponding column in the Student Registration file, if applicable.

Table 10. List of Universal Accessibility Features and Designated Accessibility Features

Feature Number	Accessibility Feature	Student Registration Column
UF1	Highlighter tool	N/A
UF2	Color contrast	N/A
UF3	Screen Zoom tool	N/A
UF4	Enlarged cursor/Mouse pointer tool	Column Q
UF5	Line reader tool	N/A
UF6	Hiding options tool	N/A
UF7	Answer eliminator (not available in 2026)	N/A
UF8	Item flag/Bookmark	N/A
UF9	Audio aid	N/A
UF10	Notepad	N/A
UF11	Test administrator reads aloud (or signs) selected words	N/A
UF12	Test administrator redirects the student's attention to the test	N/A
UF13	Test administrator reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies general test administration directions	N/A
UF14	General masking	N/A
UF15	Reverse contrast	N/A
DF1	Small group test administration (may include up to a total of 10 students)	N/A
DF2	Individual (one-to-one) test administration	N/A
DF3	Frequent brief supervised breaks	N/A
DF4	Separate or alternate test location	N/A
DF5	Seating in a specified area	N/A
DF6	Adaptive or specialized furniture	N/A
DF7	Noise buffer	N/A
DF8	Familiar test administrator	N/A
DF9	Student reads test aloud to self	N/A
DF10	Specific time of day	N/A
DF11	Stop Testing policy	N/A

Appendix C—Accessibility and Accommodations

Table 11. List of Accommodations

Accommodation Number	Accommodation	Student Registration Column
A1	Paper-based edition	Column L
A2	Large print *PBT only*	Column AI
A3.1	Screen reader	Column AL
A3.2	Braille edition	Column AJ
A3.3	Assistive Technology	Column AM
A4	Text-to-Speech *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column S
A5	Human Read-Aloud *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column T
A6.1	Human Signer *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column U
A6.2	ASL video *grade 10 Mathematics and high school Science tests only*	Column AK
A7	Human Signer for test directions only	N/A
A8	Track test items	N/A
A9	Approved graphic organizers, checklists, or supplemental reference sheets	Column R
A10.1	Scribe responses *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column V
A10.2	Speech-to-text *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column W
A11	Responses recorded on special paper	N/A
A12	Typed responses	Column AH
A13	Student records responses on a recording device	N/A
A14	Responses signed onto a video	N/A
A15	Monitor placement of responses	N/A
A16	Refreshable Braille display	N/A
A16	Braille note-taker	N/A
A17	Braille writer	N/A
A18	Word Prediction *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column X

Table 12. List of Special Access Accommodations

Accommodation Number	Special Access Accommodation	Student Registration Column
SAA1.1	Text-to-Speech for the ELA tests	Column Y
SAA1.2	Human Reader for the ELA tests	Column Z
SAA2	Human Signer for the ELA tests	Column AA
SAA3.1	Scribe for the ELA tests	Column AB
SAA3.2	Speech-to-text for the ELA tests	Column AC
SAA4	Calculator for the noncalculator session of the Mathematics test	Column AF
SAA5	Spell Checker for the ELA tests	Column AG
SAA6	Word Prediction for the ELA tests	Column AD

Table 13. List of EL Accommodations

Accommodation Number	Accommodation	Student Registration Column
EL1	Paper-based edition	Column L
EL2	Word-to word dictionary and glossary	N/A
EL3.1	Text-to-Speech *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column S
EL3.2	Human Read-Aloud *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column T
EL4.1	Scribe responses *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column V
EL4.2	Speech-to-text *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column W
EL5	Test administrator reads aloud, repeats, or clarifies general test administration directions in English	N/A
EL6	Test administrator reads aloud/repeats/clarifies general administration directions in student's native language	N/A
EL7	Spanish/English edition of the Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests	Column AE
EL8	Word prediction *Mathematics, Science, and Civics tests only*	Column X